CATS NEWSLETTER

The Official Journal of the Capital Area Timex/Sinclair Users Group

Presidential Ramblings

Meet your new rambler. This spot in the CATS Users Group was filled by election in June as expected, but we did not elect a Recording Secretary or a Program Chairman (2nd Vice President). Tom Robbins is just unable to serve in the latter position at this time. We plan to select, by random, a Monthly Secretary to take the minutes of our meetings. We could use volunters as nominees for either of these positions. Be a candidate! Get elected!

Let's try to keep CATS as one of the best sources of help to users of the Timex/Sinclair computers in the U. S. We do this first, by sharing our experiences and ideas, and second, by our presentations. Tom Robbins has left us with three programs already scheduled:

1. "Use and Demonstration of Psion's QL Easel Program" by Mannie Quintero, scheduled for July 6th, 1991.
2. "Program Transfers & Conversions, 2068 to QL, T/S-1000 to 2068, and others: by Tom Robbins, scheduled for August 10, 1991.
3. "ARCHIVE II" (sec. III was presented in May 1991) by Robbins/ Fisher and/or Duane Parker, to be scheduled.

In addition, we have other programs in mind: we plan to describe and carry-out a workshop on the CATS disk/mdv cataloging software, and we plan to discuss electronic forms (how soon will the IRS accept your 1040 on a floppy

disk?). Of course, we are always looking for suggestions from the members.

Our Executive Board will change slightly. Ruth Fegley will, of course, still be a member, and Tim Swenson has agreed to continue as Newsletter Editor and contact person. Cliff Watson and Herb Schaaf have also agreed to serve as members-at-large. Herb has also agreed to be Chairman of our 11 AM workshop - he will need help from the membership!

Bits and Bytes: Our N/L editor needs articles and other help. Please send him your contributions. In the past, we have had a columnist or two - they wrote a column for at least a couple of months. Ruth? Will you do a "Did 'Ja know?"

Puleeeese, could someone help Herb Schaaf get QL-crash data (see Feb. '91 N/L, p. 8). We really need an incentive for all QL users to respond to his plea. (A questionnaire in the N/L?)

Attend in July - the Library A/C really beats the heat (I bring a sweater!).

Contents

Key Dates

6 July: CATS Meeting
    11:00 Workshop
    1:30 Executive Board Meeting
    2:00 General Meeting

22 July: Newsletter Deadline
             For the Next Issue

10 August: CATS Meeting
          New Carrollton Library

Next Meeting:

Mannie Quintero will be giving a demonstration on his use of Easel, the QL's Business Graphics Package.

Future programs will include Electronic Forms using the QL. The Meeting Subject for June (which we did not have) will be moved to August. This will cover converting program from various Sinclair computers to other Sinclair computers.

As always, the Group is looking for suggestings, ideas, and volunteers for future meeting subjects.

From The Editor:

This is another month of drought for our Newsletter. I have not recieved a single new article since last month. I know the summer months are slow, but not this slow. Where is everybody? For this newsletter to really function, we need articles.

Many thanks to George Rey for his series of articles on wills, etc. He has helped to fill our pages for many months. His articles may not look like something found in a computer periodical, but it's a good example of how George is using his QL. Let's hear from more of you about how you use your QL, especially you non-programmers out there.

Every month I connect onto the CATS BBS to check for articles that people may have left me. I don't hang around for long, but this time I spent a few minutes to scan those messages (articles) left by other user's.

I found a few of them interesting enough to read the main article. I have forgotten how interesting BBS's could be. I must admit that I have been a bit lax in using and supporting the BBS, but I will try to change this in the future.

I hope that more of you will start to use the BBS and make it more interesting. As the comedian Gallagher says "Have you ever noticed that more people show up for a large crowd than a small crowd." It's the same way with a BBS, the more people use it, the more interesting it becomes, and the more that other people use it.

I know it takes time and effort to learn how to use the BBS, including the up and down loading of files, but once you learn it, it takes little effort to continue using it.

Let me end with a short thought: Support your User Group! Write an article, connect to the BBS, volunteer for a project of some sort, etc. This club is dependent on the participation of its members. Let's not leave it to a few to support the many.

Happy Hacking,

TIM

T/S 2068 Serial Cable
By Gallen Bench

From The Plotter March 1990

Fellow TS 2068 users. I have found over the last few months that some of the information needed to complete some projects is not always clear with the instructions you may receive with the project. During the last couple of months I have started two such projects, namely the conversion of the 2050 modem to a modified serial port, and the building of a Z-SIO port card for my 2068.

The building of both projects was not that hard to do, having some prior kit building experience, especially soldering. Let me say that the first thing anyone must have is the patience to keep working at it to get it right. After completing each of the two projects, I ran into the same problem. I needed a serial port cable that would work with each of the two projects. The 2050 converted serial port had to have a male DB25 to female DB9 cable. The Z-SIO serial port card had to have a male DB25 to male DB25 cable (DB9 and DB25 refers to the connector types).

The instructions for each project did not give a clear pinout for either cable. They did give the signal available at each pin, but how these should be configured with the signals needed for the external modem was not given. After some study and just plain trial and error, I was able to find the correct configuration for each cable. The information was there, but for a novice, it took a little work and some added advice from some friends to put it together right.

Listed below is the serial cable configuration that I have found will work on the Z-SIO serial port card, and the modified 2050 serial port. I hope this information is helpful.

RS 232	2050 SERIAL	Z-SIO
1 GRN	1 GRD	1 GRD
2 TX	2 TX	2 TX
3 RX	3 RX	3 RX
4 RTS	8 RTS	4 RTS
5 CTS	:---5 CTS	:---5 CTS
6 DSR	:---6 DSR	:---6 DSR
7 S.GND	:---7 S.GNS	:---7 S.GND
20 DTR	:---4 DTR	:--20 DTR
	:	:
	:---JUMPER----:	

I hope the above listing of how I constructed the cables for either of these serial ports will be helpful.

Estate Planning
By George Rey

Estates

As I mentioned earlier there are many types of "estates" definitions, and each can be of correspondingly different sizes and worth for the same person, depending on how one's assets are titled and structured.

My objective is to minimize my probate estate by having a simple clean cut will which is essentially empty of assets, but meets all the legal needs to get through probate and end all outside intrusions into my privacy. Of course if I am lucky and blessed with assets that approach the Federal taxable estate limit ($6000,000) then I would start to worry and hopefully spread assets into my spose's trust. If that gets filled up (another $600,000) I am

sure to go to heaven and to hell with the rest of what I may leave behind.

I retired a couple of years early as my intuition suggested I would need those years to get my finacial house in order and understandable, at least to myself. Well that's how much time it has taken -- and a large measure of that time has been in determining just what my Total, Federal, Non-probate, and Probate estates are. And with knowing that, even if approximately, I could start to plan my estate in terms of what I want my will to reflect and to do, and what type and need I may have to set any trust or like estate tool, ie, Joint Tenancy, insurances or equivalents.

In the course of all this the Abacus program (spreadsheet) is ideally suited to use, easy to upgrade, expand, and a valuable summary of where I stand in assets, obligations, income, outgoes, prospective taxes, etc., as well as providing my beneficiaries with a concise overview and information of all my account numbers, locations, etc.

Abacus, with its X - Y (row, colums) structure has permitted me to list all pertinent assets and items of interest in column A and to use all other colums to identify the asset by account name, number, location, amount, income, expense and importantly by taxable estate status, such as Probate, Federal, Non-probate, or Total, and pertinent notes.

Since Abacus allows easy summing of columns, I can sum my yearly income, expenses, net, or gross, worths. This information also helps to make schematic diagrams of money flows, bottlenecks, and areas needing some balancing or redispositon of assets to reduce exposure to probate expenses, inheritance taxes, and or federal estate taxes.

The combined Quill and Abacus programs are therefore indispensible in helping me as a do-it-yourself

planner for my estate. Of course I could get so-called experts to do all or most of all this for me -- but my experience is that they are not likely to do much better, nor save me much time and effort, and certainly they will cost a lot and worse yet I'll lose that inalienable right to privacy.

What I have written to date is what I am and have been doing, considering that I have a spouse, children, and grandchildren to be concerned with. I expect every estate plan is likely to be different and needs to be tailored to the specific circumstances of the person involved. Be it so, I still think that if you can handle a QL you can handle the future of your estate and keep the barracudas out of your backyard.

Next edition I'll chat about Powers of Attorneys, a subject well covered by Denis Clifford in his new book "The Power of Attorney." All this amounts to the fact that you really don't have the right to die without attorney and medical consensuses. One more indication of how far our civilization (?) has progressed over the ages.

After this I'll voluteer to make a summary presentation to the club with emphasis on the Abacus matrix I have developed for my use which can be a guide for you do-it-yourselfers who wish to do your own in your estate planning.

Classifieds

Next Workshop

Those at the June meeting will recall how I accepted the post as the 11am workshop leader. They may also recall the offer from Tom Robbins about some excellent industrial strength printers (and modems?) which he hopes to make available to CATS members. That eill be a fine topic for some future hardware session.

There is no special topic for July, but here are a few themes that may whet your interest:

1. QL to RGB Cables. Let's see Hank Dickson's progress and help him along.
2. Ergonomics. Ideas on how to arrange the furniture, etc.
3. Peripherals, cassettes, disks, printers, modems, etc.
4. Good, Bad, & Uh QL's:
   a) Power supplies
   b) ROMS & EPROMS
   c) Mods & "fixes"
5. ZX-81 and 2068 doo-dads.
6. T-S (could stand for Timex-Sinclair, or Tea & Sympathy, or Trouble Shooting, or Tough Situation).

Come and share in the fun and frustration. We might help you, you might help us, who knows?

Trump Card on the QL
By Butch Weinberg

From Nite Times News Nov-Dec 1989

Well, here we go again! Al Feng said, "Ask Butch about the TRUMP Card". Now you may not have to!

The TRUMP Card that I use is a combination 768K memory board and disk interface. As with all QL disk interfaces, it plugs into the 64-way connector which is located behind a "trap door" on the left hand side of the keyboard. Currently, there are three versions of the TRUMP Card available (Memory varies in 256K increments). All are fully socketed; and, lesser boards can now be expanded with the addition of the appropriate chips.

The TRUMP Card has additional code which makes the "extra" 256K of RAM act as though it is a part of the "standard" 640K to which a QL is normally limited. Consequently, all of the extra memory can be used as a single RAM disk of over 800K ("Dynamic" RAM disk code is just one of the added features of the TRUMP Card).

SuperTOOLKIT coding is another major inclusion on the TRUMP Card. The SuperTOOLKIT code is in "upper" memory, and must be invoked using the 'TK2_ext'. The ROM port remains free for another EPROM. The advantages of the SuperTOOLKIT are too numerous to mention here.

While the TRUMP Card's current cost may seem high, it is bound to come down a little as DRAM prices come down. You can always purchase one of a 256K board for the time being, and add chips later.

If you get the TRUMP Card, I don't think that you will be disappointed. I've been using the TRUMP card along with dual 720K 5.25" disk drives for about a year now and I'm as pleased today as I was when I finally began to unleash the potential of the QL.

The only real limitation is the inability to address more than two drives. Tom Bent (of the CATS User Group) has suggested a possible fix for this; but, I don't have a need to access more than two drives.

Al Feng has mentioned that the 34 pin socket (for the I/O cable) lacks a "quick release" mechanism; and, he thinks the lack of a plastic shroud makes the QL look a bit unfinished. Neither bothers me; and, I'm the one using it every day!
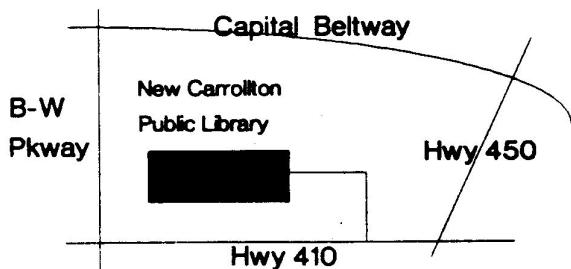
The Capital Area Timex/Sinclair Users Group is a not-for-profit group devoted to serving the interests of those who own, use, or are interested in the Timex/ Sinclair family of computers.

Executive Board

President	Duane Parker
1st Vice President	Hank Dickson
2nd Vice President	Open
Recording Secretary	Open
Corresponding Secretary	Joe Miller
Treasurer	Barry Washington
Members-at-Large	Cliff Watson Herb Schaaf
Immediate Past President	Ruth Fegley
Newsletter Editor & Contact Person	Tim Swenson (703)820-6657

CATS maintains a gratis exchange of newsletters with approximately 30 Users Groups across the U.S. and Canada. Groups not sending a newsletter to us for six months are automatically taken off the list.

Meetings

Monthly meetings are held from 11:00 AM to 4:30 PM, on the second Saturday of each month, at the New Carrollton Public Library.

Newsletter

Memberships cost $15 per year, are good for 12 months, and include all privileges (access to libraries, group buys, etc.). A newsletter only subscription is available for persons living outside the Washington Metro area and is $12 per year.

Networks

Timex SIG on Compuserve: Wednesday night, 10:00 PM Eastern time (GO CLUB).

CATS BBS: (301) 588-0579, 8-N-1, 300/1200 baud. News and general information, 24 hours a day.

CATS Newsletter
P. O. Box 11017
Takoma Park, MD 20913

FIRST CLASS MAIL

The next meeting of CATS will be held on: July 6, 1991

11:00 AM   Workshop
2:00 PM   General Meeting

At: New Carrollton Public Library 7414 Riverdale Road (Hwy 410), New Carrollton, MD

IF YOU ARE NOT A MEMBER OF CATS. THIS IS THE ONLY ISSUE YOU WILL RECEIVE